

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IOE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07 DHA-02 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 INRE-00 /098 W

----- 068997

O R 281731Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6056

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 501

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, USUN, US, SY

SUBJ: SYRIAN DEMARCHE DENOUNCES US VETO

1. DEPUTY FONMIN RAFA'I, SENIOR OFFICIAL IN ABSENCE OF  
FONMIN KHADDAM WHO HAS RETURNED TO BEIRUT, SUMMONED ME LATE  
AFTERNOON JAN 28 TO RECEIVE FOLLOWING DEMARCHE CONCERNING  
OUR SC VETO.

2. RAFA'I SAID HE HAD BEEN CHARGED TO EXPRESS SYRIA'S  
"DEEP DISSATISFACTION AND SORROW" ABOUT U.S. ATTITUDE. U.S.  
HAD CREATED IMPASSE IN THE PEACE PROCESS, BLOCKING WAY  
TOWARDS A JUST AND LASTING PEACE. U.S. ATTITUDE WAS CONTRARY TO  
SPIRIT OF UN CHARTER, RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN SELF-  
DETERMINATION, AND TO PRINCIPLE THAT TERRITORIES SHOULD  
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NOT BE OCCUPIED BY FORCE.

3. RAFA'I DESCRIBED DRAFT RESOLUTION AS "OBJECTIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE, AND MODERATE." U.S. ATTITUDE, UNFORTUNATELY, DOES NOT HELP ACCELERATE REESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE. IT REFLECTS US TRADITIONAL SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL AGGRESSIVENESS AND EXPANSIONISM. OUR VETO, HE OBSERVED, WILL NOT LEAD SYRIA TO STOP ITS EFFORTS IN ALL FIELDS, INCLUDING AT UNGA AND AGAIN IN UNSC. SYRIA BELIEVES IT HAS ALREADY ACHIEVED A BROADER WORLD UNDERSTANDING OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS AND THE NEED FOR TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. SYRIA IS ASSURED THAT THESE PRINCIPLES WILL FINALLY BE ADMITTED, DESPITE HOSTILE POSITION TAKEN BY SOME COUNTRIES, INCLUDING U.S. SYRIA REGRETS THAT USG AS GREAT POWER HAS FAILED TO ASSUME ITS GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD INTERNATIONAL PEACE. IT SEEMS TO SYRIA, RAFA'I CINCLUDED, THAT A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS HAS ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED IN AMERICAN POLITICAL CIRCLES THAN AMERICAN VETO REVEALED.

4. I REPLIED THAT SINCE RAFA'I HAD INDICATED HE HAD ALREADY READ DEPARTMENT'S JAN 26 STATEMENT ON M.E., I WISHED STRESS ONLY TWO OR THREE OF ITS PRINCIPAL POINTS AND MAKE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO SYRIA. BOTH DAMASCUS AND WASHINGTON WERE CLEARLY SEARCHING FOR THE ROAD TOWARDS PEACE. SYRIA HAD SEEN IN THE SC DEBATE AND THE DRAFT RESOLUTION THE PREFERRED ROUTE. WE HAD DISAGREED AND HAD BEEN FRANK IN SHARING OUR DISAGREEMENT WITH SYRIAN LEADERSHIP FROM BEGINNING. WE VETOED THE DRAFT RESOLUTION BECAUSE WE WERE CONCERNED THAT NOT TO HAVE DONE SO WOULD HAVE BLOCKED PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE AND IN FACT HAVE SERIOUSLY DELAYED RESUMPTION OF THE SEARCH FOR PEACE.

5. SOME SYRIANS FONDLY BELIEVED WE COULD EASILY FORCE ISRAELIS TO MOVE TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE BY MANIPULATING OUR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE. WITH ALL RESPECT, WE WERE A BETTER JUDGE THAN SYRIA OF HOW TO BRING ISRAELIS TO NEGOTIATE. NEGOTIATIONS WOULD NOT RPT NOT WORK IF PARTICIPATION OF PARTIES IS NOT VOLUNTARY. ISRAEL ABSENTED ITSELF FROM NEW  
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YORK AGAINST OUR ADVICE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO ATTEND. ONE SPECIFIC RESULT OF OUR NOT VETOING RESOLUTION WOULD HAVE BEEN TO DRIVE ISRAELIS EVEN FURTHER AWAY FROM THE TABLE. IF WE ALL NEEDED TO RECONSIDER THE FRAMEWORK OF NEGOTIATIONS, THIS CAN AND MUST BE DONE IN THE GENEVA CONTEXT. WE HAVE NO PRECONCEPTIONS ABOUT A SOLUTION FOR PALESTINIAN PEOPLE BUT A FIRM CONVICTION THAT SUCH SOLUTION MUST BE WORKED OUT IN CONTEXT OF NEGOTIATIONS.

WE HAD SUGGESTED A PREPARATORY CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA. IF THERE ARE BETTER IDEAS AROUND, WE WERE READY AND EAGER TO HEAR THEM.

6. RAFA'I COMMENTED THAT, "TO SAY THE LEAST, YOUR VETO DID NOT COME AS A SURPRISE." HE NOTED THAT HE HAD CALLED IN REPRESENTATIVES OF UK AND ITALY EARLIER TODAY TO EXPRESS SYRIAN UNHAPPINESS AT THEIR ABSTENTION AND, IN PARTICULAR, AT THE LAST MINUTE UPSET CAUSED BY THE BRITISH AMENDMENT.

7. COMMENT: FBIS (281312Z, JAN 76) CARRIES FULL TEXT OF SYRIAN DENUNCIATION OF OUR VETO AS BROADCAST IN MID-AFTERNOON IN NAME OF THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION. IT CONTAINS MORE PROVOCATIVE LANGUAGE BUT COVERS SAME GROUND AS RAFA'T'S DEMARCHE. WE ARE IN FOR SEVERAL DAYS' LAMBASTING IN MEDIA, BUT RAFA'T'S DEMARCHE CAN BEST BE DESCRIBED AS FOR THE RECORD.  
MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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